



# Plymouth Monthly Meeting Newsletter

## Meetings for Worship

First Day Plain worship, no Zoom, 10-11  
 First Day Meeting blended worship: 11:15 am  
**Fourth Day Meeting: 7:00 pm (blended)**

Address: 2150 Butler Pike,  
 Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462  
[office@plymouthmeetingquakers.org](mailto:office@plymouthmeetingquakers.org)

## February 2023

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## February 2023

Sun	Feb 12	6:00 pm	Worship & Ministry via Zoom
Tues	Feb 14	4:30 pm	Land Acknowledgement meeting in the Annie H (in person only) All are welcome
Sun	Feb 19	9:00 am	Meeting for Business (blended)
Fri	Feb 24	7:00 pm	Manfred Brauch speaks on "The Christian Heresy of White Nationalism" at Norristown Monthly Meeting (see attached flyer)
Sun	Feb 26	After Meeting	Friendly Fourth with author John Cardina

## March 2023

Fri	Mar 3	7:00 pm	Peace and Social Concerns (blended)
Tues	Mar 7	7:00 pm	Care & Concern via Zoom
Sun	Mar 12	6:00 pm	Worship & Ministry via Zoom
Sun	Mar 19	9:00 am	Meeting for Business (blended)
Sun	Mar 26	After Meeting	Friendly Fourth

- All First Day Meetings for Worship will begin at 10:00 (Plain worship, no Zoom) and 11:15 am (blended worship). Masks are not required but we will continue to social distance. **Check the website for updates**
- Wednesday evening Meeting for Worship begins at 7:00pm and will also be held via Zoom as well as *in person in the Meetinghouse (blended)*.
- PMM Zoom information always available at [plymouthmonthlymeeting@gmail.com](mailto:plymouthmonthlymeeting@gmail.com) or contact Dave Miller

# Query for February

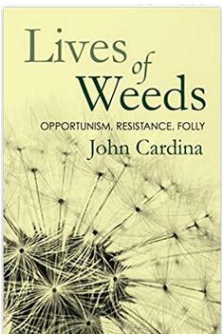
## Nurturing Our Community: Stewardship of Resources

- How does our meeting accommodate ecological, economic and social justice in its uses of property and money?
  - Does our meeting engage its members in supporting the meeting's work, its ministry and the upkeep of its property?
  - Does our meeting encourage its members to support with their time, energy and finances the quarterly and yearly meetings and other Quaker organizations?
  - To what extent does our meeting rely on current members and attenders for financial support and to what extent on other sources?
- *How do I demonstrate in my own decision making a concern for ecological, economic and social justice?*
  - *How do I simplify my needs, making choices that balance self-sufficiency and fair sharing of resources?*
  - *Do I balance my work-life and other activities with the time and energy needed for my spiritual growth and service?*
  - *Do I contribute to the work of Friends in my meeting, in the quarterly and yearly meetings and in the wider world of Friends?*

## News from the Meeting

### Friendly Fourth February 26 featuring author John Cardina

Our discussion of member-authored books continues on February 26 after Meeting and our Friendly Fourth meal. John Cardina will present his book *Lives of Weeds: Opportunism, Resistance, Folly*. Bring your questions about those pestiferous plants that frustrate efforts to nourish body and soul. Join a free discussion of the history, biology, ecology, and absurdity of weedy plants and human efforts to control them. Copies of the book are available in the Meeting library.



On Saturday mornings John is known as one of the boys of the dirt with a love for being outdoors among the plants, indoors with his hands wood working and for the gift of crawling into tight spaces. But there is so much more to John. His book the *Lives of Weeds* opens to us the breath of his knowledge of the natural world and the people who interface with it.

### Annual Meeting Party

Care and Concern is considering reviving the tradition of the Annual Party/Dinner, probably April 15 or 22. It's catered, so for once, we aren't looking for the usual pot luck soup or snacks. There is a cost, but we try to keep it reasonable.

Do folks have any interest in attending? Email the editor ([pattieod@gmail.com](mailto:pattieod@gmail.com)) or talk to Bonnie, Fran, Carol or Sally at Meeting. Information to follow.

## Join a Committee

If you're an active attender and find yourself interested in learning more about PMM or contributing your time and/or talent to the Meeting, please talk to someone in Meeting. Meanwhile, check out the website at <https://www.plymouthmeetingquakers.org>

## Plymouth Monthly Meeting's Land Acknowledgement First Meeting Feb 14, 4:30 pm

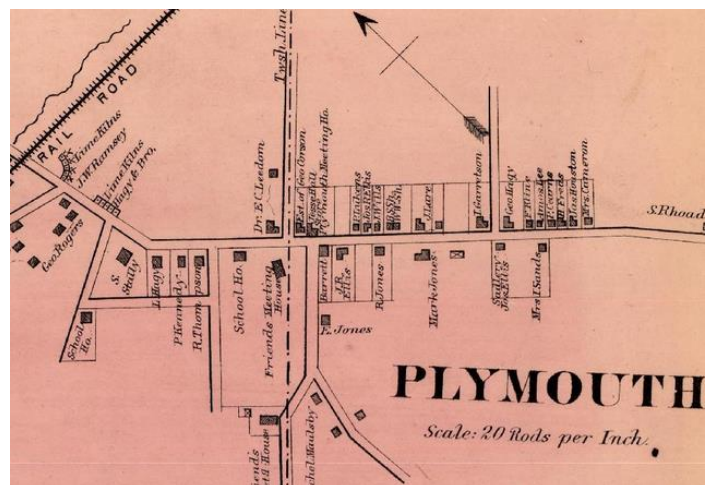
The native Duwamish people tell us that "For non-Indigenous communities, land acknowledgement is a powerful way of showing respect and honoring the Indigenous Peoples of the land on which we work and live. Acknowledgement is a simple way of resisting the erasure of Indigenous histories and working towards honoring and inviting the truth.

Our Monthly Meeting land acknowledgement is at the very beginning of the process. Anyone who would like to help with the our acknowledgement, please contact David Miller. We will be gathering this month to begin the process. The steps we will take in preparing a land acknowledgment are:

- Research the history of the land which our Meeting House is built on
- Educate ourselves about:
  - the history of the Lenape People who lived on this land
  - the history of the indigenous people that lived within the area now identified as the United States and their relationship to our government and its people
  - the history of Quaker relationship to indigenous Peoples including the boarding schools for the indigenous peoples
- Open a relationship with Lanape people in our tristate region. Take an opportunity with them to hear them tell their history
- In a variety of ways, bring the knowledge that we have gained to the Monthly Meeting, our School and our community. Sponsor events that bring Lenape people to our community to teach and share with us
- Test the Land Acknowledgement wording with Lenape people
- Integrate the stewardship of our land with our Land Acknowledgement and Native peoples' understanding of a right relationship with the land. Seek to engage with indigenous peoples' efforts to heal the land and address climate change
- Determine how, in an ongoing way, we can support Lenape people (financially, politically, Socially, Spiritually)

Much has been written to help us on our way. A collection of 6 books have been purchased to provide a foundation of knowledge. Pick one up from the Meeting Library or from your local library if they have been checked out. If you have one of the Meeting books, please make sure you have signed it out, so we know where it is. If you can bring it back in 2-3 weeks so others can read it. The recommended books to read are:

- Lenape Country: Delaware Valley Society Before William Penn by Jean R. Soderlund



- This Very Ground, This Crooked Affair Paperback by John L Ruth (Author), Raylene Hinz-Penner
- An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz
- As They Were Led: Quakerly Steps and Missteps Toward Native Justice: 1795-1940 by Martha Claire Catlin
- Our History Is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance Hardcover by Nick Estes
- Braiding Sweet Grass, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants by Robin Wall Kimmermer

This is a long process but when completed a meaningful acknowledgment can be made. Paula Palmer, Director of the Toward Right Relationship project from the Indigenous Peoples Concerns Committee of Boulder Friends Meeting writes: Native organizations are not asking us to judge our Quaker ancestors. They are asking, "Who are Friends today? Knowing what we know now, will Quakers join us in honest dialogue? Will they acknowledge the harm that was done? Will they seek ways to contribute toward healing processes that are desperately needed in Native communities?" Our beginning with learning the history of our land and the history of Quakers and the US government relationship to native peoples will provide us a starting point to answer these questions.

## **Norristown Meeting Hosts Speaker on Christian Nationalism Feb 24, 7pm**

Dr. Manfred Brauch, Professor Emeritus of Biblical Theology and Past President of Palmer Theological Seminary of Eastern University in St. Davids, PA will cover the historical background of Christian Nationalism and its tragic consequences. Refreshments will be served.

- Learn how the Scripture is misused and abused in support of Christian Nationalism
- Hear about the most recent manifestation in the right wing of American Protestantism
- Christian Nationalism is an 'oxymoron' especially in light of the life and ministry of Jesus where uses of power to control, oppress, exclude and manipulate are rejected.

## **News from the School PMFS Mexican Exchange Returns**

Students from the Colegio Williams de Cuernavaca school in Mexico returned to their homes on February 2nd ending Part One of the Exchange Program. During their last weekend, PMFS 5th and 6th grade students had a day off from school to spend extra time with their exchange buddies. Weekend trips included the Poconos for snow tubing, (their only chance to see snow) NYC, the mall, hiking trails, the Chestnut Hill on Ice Festival, and downtown Philadelphia. A Farewell Ceremony was held including students, faculty and families when students from the Williams School each shared a speech on their experience.

Part Two will begin February 23rd through March 9th when our students will be reunited with their exchange buddies and families in Cuernavaca. We hold our PMFS students in the light with care and hope for a wonderful, memorable experience during their exchange.

## Black History Month

In a time when there are people and organizations speaking loudly about not teaching history which “makes us uncomfortable” Friends at Plymouth have a rich history of sharing our story both that which we are proud of and that which we are profoundly repentant for. As Black History month unfolds Friends are asked to take time to learn more about our history, both the joys and sorrows.

One place to learn more about the interface between Black and White Quakers is “The BlackQuaker Project”. Their website <https://www.theblackquakerproject.org> will introduce you to the contribution of Quakers of Color. A recently completed film festival introduced people of African descent and Quaker membership or association who made a significant impact on our Delaware Valley Community, our nation and the world. We will strive to find and bring some of these films to our Meeting for a future viewing. Use the link above to go to a description of the films in the festival that told the story of

**Bill Sutherland (1918-2010)**: nonviolence advocate, veteran AFSC employee, imprisoned conscientious objector, friend and active supporter of African liberation and freedom fighters.

**Joan Countryman (b. 1945)**: first African American graduate of Germantown Friends School, longtime teacher and administrator in Friends’ schools, former head of Lincoln School and co-founder of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership School for Girls in South Africa.

**Sarah Mapps Douglass (1806-1882)**: prolific educator, author, committed abolitionist, and ancestor of Paul Robeson.

**Benjamin Banneker (1731-1806)**: almanac publisher, astronomer, petitioner to Thomas Jefferson for African American abolition, and faithful Attender of Quaker Meeting.

**Paul Robeson (1898-1976)**: the “beleaguered leader” and “artist as revolutionary,” groundbreaking recording, film, theatrical, and music star.



Plymouth Meeting has a pivotal place in both the Abolition and Underground Railroad movements. Of which we are much aware. Our relationship to slavery however is less known. Recent correlation of the many manumission documents of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting have made available more information about holding people in slavery here in Plymouth Meeting and Gwynedd Meeting (Plymouth and Gwynedd Meeting were one Monthly meeting in the 1700’s – 1900’s).



“Am I not a man and a brother?”

Illustration from 1837 publication of John Greenleaf Whittier’s antislavery poem, “Our Countrymen in Chains.” Woodcut.

<https://americanliterature.com/author/john-greenleaf-whittier/poem/our-countrymen-in-chains>

The documents show that there were 18 people held in slavery before and up to 1776 the year slavery was abolished in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. People whose names were: Dinah, Marge, Rachel, Dina, Neece, Jack alias John Powel, William Bolton, Lucy Bolton, Hester, Fanny, Sip, Kuff, Hester, Dick, Rose Boulton, David Boulton, Jack White.

They numbered 16% of all the people held in slavery in Montgomery County. Nine Quakers (both male and female) held these people in slavery using them as free labor for their farms, business and homes. It is unknown if there were more held in slavery by Plymouth and Gwynedd Meeting whose Manumission are not recorded here. A table of the names of the people held in slavery and the people who engaged in holding them will be posted on our website as well as a link to the full Manumission spreadsheet for Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. With the knowledge of past and present actions of people whose actions were and were not motions of love to one another, perhaps we can one day choose to come into that peaceable kingdom of being brothers and sisters to one another.

## Property Committee

You may have heard that this month our Meeting House porch was damaged by a truck that backed into it during the evening or nighttime hours. We do not know who it was. Damage is located on the corner of the roof where the Germantown Pike and Butler Pike sides of the roof join. The damage was limited to the tin roof covering, the roof boards below the damaged section, the rafter tail and the gutters. We have contacted the insurance company and the company that replaced the tin roof in the 1970’s. Repairs will begin once paperwork is done, and materials can be found (tin roofing is no longer made and the molding on the roof boards is not common).



Your help is needed indoors and out to help care for our Meeting House. A list of chores is being assembled for use during a spring workday yet to be scheduled. If you would like to help with the weekly housekeeping contact Ralph Henninger or Inta Ezerins. If you would like to help on Saturday mornings when repairs are made to the building, graveyard or grounds contact Mark Setman.

## Peace & Social Concerns

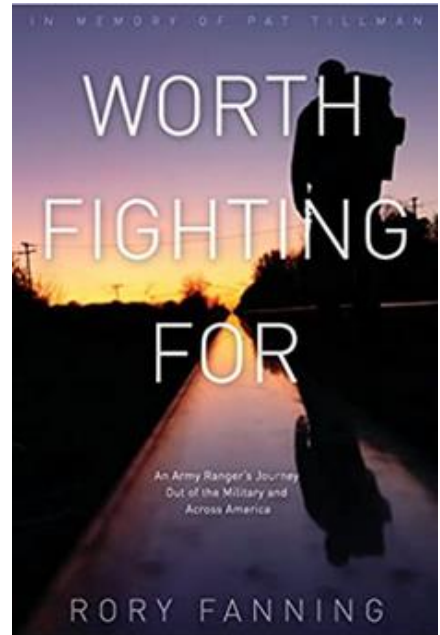
### Conscientious Objection

A new book about a current experience of consensus objection is being added to our library.

It's been a while since the men of our community have been pressed up against the question of being a consensus objector. In recent generations of male Quakers, the question of consensus objection may only come up when applying for government student loans for college or a civil service job. With the volunteer military post Viet Nam conscientious objection has faded from the minds of many Friends.

Those of us who made the choice during Vietnam can't help but think what it is like for a young male pacifist in Ukraine or Russia. It is an unsettling thought when by the grace of fate we were born here and not 5,000 miles to the east. But what of our children who have entered the military? How are they supported in their discernment that the decision to serve was made from ignorance of the reality of what will be asked of them?

The book "Worth Fighting For – An Army Ranger's Journey Out of the Military and Across America" is a journal of Rory Fanning who made the transition from the patriotic signing up post 9/11 to serve his country as an elite soldier to a man walking across our country sorting out why he could no longer be a part of the killing. This book of short journal entries gives the reader some insight into a soldier's return from combat having made the hard decision not to be a part of war no more.



If you are unaware of the work of Quaker House of Fayetteville NC, this is the work they do in counseling active-duty service members, veterans, reservists, members of the National Guard, families and partners, and former spouses and partners. There is a critical program for those dealing with the invisible wounds of war and combat readiness. Each year our Monthly Meeting makes a small donation to their work offering counseling for issues of moral injury, domestic violence and sexual assault.

### Please Update your Contact information

Have you changed your address, phone number or email address? Please do not lose touch with us. Send an email to Sally Bishop to request that your information be updated. The email can be sent directly to her or to [office@plymouthmeetingquakers.org](mailto:office@plymouthmeetingquakers.org). If you are a member of the website, you can make the changes yourself and save Sally some work. Go to the home page of the website and sign in. Then click on the "my account" tab at the top of the page. When the my account page opens click on Profile tab and make the changes you wish to make. Note there is also a tab for changing password if needed.

As always, if you are having trouble locating items on the website or logging in contact David Miller or send a note to [office@plymouthmeetingquakers.org](mailto:office@plymouthmeetingquakers.org)